

**Before the  
Federal Communications Commission  
Washington, D.C. 20554**

In the Matter of )  
 )  
Empowering Parents and Protecting Children )  
in an Evolving Media Landscape )

MB Docket No. 09-194

**Comments from Citizen/Student**

The proposed interest in empowering parents over evolving media environments and safety of children thereof shows initiative to improve guidelines of parental rights. Parents need to be aware and educated on the likely exposure their children are capable of. With guidelines, such as the above, parents may be well informed on safety concerns in regards to foods, violence, sex and drugs, along with newly expanding worlds of virtual freedom and potentially harmful networks.

The Federal Trade Commission supports the Federal Communications Commission’s important initiative to examine the evolving media landscape with a view toward empowering parents and protecting children from inappropriate contact, conduct and content (FTC). After review of statements such as this from organizations such as the Federal Trade Commission or the Entertainment Merchants Association it shows support in providing information to parents in respect to improving safe electronic environments to children.

Entertainment Merchants Association (EMA) points out that the target environments “can educate, amuse, inspire, challenge, and bring people together (EMA),” which is absolutely true providing the environment is not tarnished with harmful content. The EMA also directs attention to the responsibility of the parents with the availability of game and movie ratings along with personal involvement with children’s activities. Most of the responsibility in respect to the subject at hand falls into the guidance of children through parenting. Government responsibilities are being conditioned on the bases of sales. For example, the EMA reports, the Commission found that children it sent into stores to buy Mature-rated games were turned down 83% of the time, when weighted for retailer market share (EMA). This shows a

dramatic change from what was once a 16% turn down rate. Thus, regulatory agencies have shown vast improvements therefore placing more responsibility on the parents.

As a result of newly discovered downfalls of internet and media in respect to children's exposure there has been large growth in public attention. Consistently on news programs stories are disclosed as to dangerous activities or questionable media in respect to children. The Federal Trade Commission listed numerous websites which provide useful information and steps guardians may take to maintain a safe electronic entertainment community.

In respects to marketing and ethics, there should be solid and defined terms for those advertisements particularly directed toward tweens or young adults. Deterring and also providing swift response to businesses choosing not to obey regulations in code for the safety of children. It was pointed out by the FTA the large impact children have on purchases both individually and amongst the family. Generous budgets to youth marketing should be monitored but only with regards to protection of children and families.

In research, the first amendment becomes a consistent example of the tangible guideline in which this motion is concerned. The Progress and Freedom Foundation asks "whether [any proposed actions to regulate electronic media platforms] would be consistent with the First Amendment." Again, the answer is no (PFF). The previous statement represents the clear and present danger of proposed concerns. The foundation statement continues to describe the multiplying sources available for parents to control both television and internet and by having this control minimizing the restrictions based on personal responsibility.

One interesting idea presented by the Progress and Freedom Foundation is the commissions focus on the malicious material rather than the abundance of positive materials found on the internet and television assisting children in learning. Computers have changed the face of education therefore there will be a period of adjustment. However, computers are now a substantial instrument in education. When all the smoke clears there is clear evidence that the majority of this problems solution lies in the hands of the guardians of children. Good direction and leadership is the responsibility of the guardians in keeping child's environment neutral without judgment. The electronic environment should be treated no differently than what is outside the front door. Children left in the street to play can be dangerous.

All sides have valid points in reference to this motion. The phrase empowering parents shows the target audience that needs to be educated. Should the government have a hand in the household? Absolutely not! But the government may make very clear to the public what to look for and educate those responsible. Meanwhile intervening or improving on those lacking the responsibility. The Progress and Freedom Foundation pointed out various actions, such as the Communications Decency Act of 1996, which proves this is not something new to Washington. Essentially the empowerment comes down to one fundamental problem which is focused on the education. The Federal Communications Commission may want to spend more focus on education nationwide rather expanding the regulatory arm.

#### References:

Federal Communications Commission. Comments of The Progress & Freedom Foundation ("PFF") & The Electronic Frontier Foundation ("EFF"). MB Docket No. 09-194. Web. Retrieved 24Jun2010 from [http://www.pff.org/issues-pubs/filings/2010/2010-02-24-PFF-EFF\\_Response.pdf](http://www.pff.org/issues-pubs/filings/2010/2010-02-24-PFF-EFF_Response.pdf)

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